DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 202 805 SP 017 800

AUTHOR Lehr, Milt
TITLE Changes in Teacher Education: The Holy Grail of Quality.
PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 14p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Faculty; *Competency Based Teacher Education; Higher Education; Minimum Competencies; *Needs Assessment; Preservice Teacher Education; *Public School Teachers; State Standards; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teaching Skills
IDENTIFIERS Oklahoma

ABSTRACT

House Bill 1706, passed by the Oklahoma state legislature in 1980, reflected a concern by the public for improved quality in teacher preparation, and mandated curriculum examinations in subject areas, higher admission requirements, and one year of apprentice teaching, among other significan features. Spurred by the passage of this bill and by interest in a competency based approach to teacher preparation, the Teacher Education Committee at Northwestern Oklahoma State University approved the development of a competency based teacher education program. A subcommittee identified and wrote professional education competencies which students should master prior to program completion. These recommended competencies were presented to the Committee with a recommendation that public school teachers and administrators be invited to participate in a needs assessment to establish competency priorities. A total of 391 educators from 63 schools returned usable responses to the survey. It was revealed that considerable differences exist in several areas between what public school educators and university staff (and accrediting bodies) believe concerning the relative importance of competency areas. It is believed that the use of a needs assessment approach involving both university staff and public school personnel responses is a sounder approach than the use of one group's opinions alone. It is also realized that no research evidence exists which shows that one group's opinions are more valid than those of the other. (MJB)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED202805

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

# Changes In Teacher Education: The Holy Grail of Quality

Milt Lehr

Northwestern Oklahoma State University

Alva, OK 73717

2138 Words

SP 017800

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Milt Lehr
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Running head: Changes

Changes in Teacher Education: The Holy Grail of Quality

A variety of factors have caused many educators, legislators, and lay people to question the effectiveness of programs which prepare teachers for the public schools. A sustained decrease in the achievement scores attained by high school students on national achievement tests; a widespread belief that the number of functionally illiterate adults is increasing; findings which show that nearly twice as many teachers in several teaching fields are being produced by the colleges and universities as can be employed by public schools; and a recognition that the tremendous competition between teacher producing institutions has caused excessive emphasis on the "warm body" syndrome at the expense of quality, were all contributing factors which led the 1980 Oklahoma Legislature to pass a new teacher preparation law (HB1706) whose far-reaching effects are yet to be ascertained.

Among the bill's most significant features is a requirement that candidates pass a curriculum examination in their respective teaching fields; the establishment of higher minimum admission requirements for entrance into teacher education programs; the postponement of certification until the candidate has successfully completed one year of teaching as an entry year or apprentice teacher under a paid and carefully selected entry year supervising teacher; the use of an entry year supervising committee; and a requirement that each college or university instructor involved in a teacher education program must teach in the public schools every five years for at least one-half day for a semester. A major weakness of the bill is that no requirement was included for measuring mastery of professional education competencies.

The passage of the above bill, combined with a study of trends in the preparation of teachers, are indicators that teacher education programs in Oklahoma will become more field oriented; required teaching competencies will

be specifically identified and their mastery required and measured; admission and retention standards will be raised; the period of preparation will be extended with public schools assuming increasing responsibility; and much closer coordination and cooperation will be required between all educators involved in the teacher education process.

A team of education faculty members at Northwestern Oklahoma State University has been conducting an intensive study of the institution's preparation of secondary teachers, particularly as it concerns the professional education component. The team was especially interested in a "competency based" approach to the preparation of teachers but were aware of the controversy regarding this approach which exists nationwide as has been typified by experiences at Illinois State University (Lorber, 1979) where one competency approach was tried and then discontinued, to San Diego State University (Smith and Nagel, 1975) where a competency based program has been in effect for several years and a doctoral study (Enos, 1976) revealed that students who completed this type of program performed significantly better in most teaching areas than those who completed a regular program. Two surveys conducted by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education in 1972 and 1975 (AACTE, 1976) concluded that large numbers of AACTE member institutions were operating either limited or full scale performance or competency based teacher education programs. The Northwestern team concluded that its institution could no longer advocate a teacher education program which consisted mainly of course titles without requiring any specified outcomes and knowledge and skills to be mastered. It was further determined that students had a right to know what specific competencies they are expected to master and how these competencies will be evaluated.

In September, 1979, the institution's Teacher Education Committee took action approving the development of a competency based teacher education program. Because of the scope of this task, it was agreed that initially this approach would be limited to include only the professional education component for secondary education majors. A subcommittee was appointed, comprised of four faculty members who had experience and skills in goal writing. This committee was assigned the responsibility for first identifying and writing those mid-range professional education competnecies which it believed should be mastered by all secondary teaching candidates prior to completion of their programs.

In November, 1979, the subcommittee presented a tentative list of proposed competnecies to the Teacher Education Committee plus a recommendation that the teachers and administrators in the public schools of northwestern Oklahoma be invited to participate in a needs assessment to help establish competency priorities which the university's teacher education program should meet. After some modification of the proposed list by the full Committee and its subsequent approval, 80 public schools were contacted and asked if they would be willing to participate in the assessment process. Sixty-four accepted the invitation.

In late November, seven (7) survey forms and a return envelope were sent to each participating school, one to be completed by the superintendent, one by a secondary principal, and five by outstanding teachers in each school as selected by the superintendent. Of the 64 participating schools, 63 returned their completed surveys. In a few instances, some schools returned fewer than seven completed forms. A total of 422 survey forms were returned. Inspection

revealed that 31 forms were improperly completed. Therefore, the final sample was comprised of 391 educators of whom 276 were classroom teachers, 63 were principals, and 52 were superintendents.

The mean age of these 391 respondents was 38.8 years and they had taught an average of 12.1 years. The group was comprised of 216 (57.1%) males and 162 (43.9%) females. The typical respondent had two children. All teaching fields were represented with the greatest numbers coming from English (69), business (36), science (36), and mathematics (33).

Of the educators comprising the sample, 88 percent had completed their undergraduate degrees in Oklahoma colleges and universities with 105 having graduated from NWOSU, 55 from SWOSU, 55 from OSU, 40 from Panhandle, 35 from CSU, and the remaining educators graduating from seven other Oklahoma schools. Twenty-eight respondents had graduated from 10 different Kansas institutions of higher learning, eight had completed their work at six Texas schools, and the remaining 12 received degrees from institutions located in nine additional states.

The results of this needs assessment survey are shown in Table 1 with the relative importance of each competency, as evaluated by each group of public school educators, listed in rank order of their importance.

A statistical comparison of how the three educator groups evaluated the relative importance of the 35 mid-range professional education competencies was made using the Kendall Rank Correlation Coefficient and this revealed a correlation of .74 between the teacher and superintendent evaluations, a .73 correlation between teachers and principals, and .80 between superintendent and principal evaluations.

A 't' test of the correlations found a significant relationship at the .01 level of confidence between each of the group evaluations.

A compilation was also made of the many suggestions made by respondents concerning how they believed the Teacher Education program could be improved. The categories of responses and their number are shown in Table 2.

## Implications and Conclusions

A considerable difference in opinion exists in several areas between what public school educators in northwestern Oklahoma, university staff, as well as accrediting bodies, believe concerning the relative importance of the competency areas which should be emphasized in the professional education preparation component of secondary teachers. Competency in knowledge of foundation areas; knowledge of ethnic groups; knowledge concerning the organization of public schools; knowledge of professional groups; knowledge of skills in audio-visual media and materials; and knowledge of learning theory and techniques were all considered as being relatively unimportant by public school educators although these competency areas have nearly always been included as an integral part of preparation programs at colleges and universities.

An examination of the ratings, and of the many additional comments, indicate that public school educators in this particular part of Oklahoma want greater emphasis placed on the development of teaching skills; an increase in the length of student or intern teaching; greater and earlier contact with students; increased skill in the ability of newly prepared teachers to minimize disruptive student behavior; improved evaluation skills; and improvement in other areas.

All findings revealed by this needs assessment are being carefully

considered as Northwestern undertakes a substantial overhaul of its secondary professional education component and moves toward a competency based approach in its program. It is recognized, however, that this type of assessment does have a number of limitations which must be considered in the redesigning of a teacher education program. It is believed that the use of a needs assessment approach provides a sounder basis for the reorganizations and development of a program than an approach where needs have been based solely on the perceptions of college staff while the opinions of public school personnel have been largely ignored. No research evidence exists, however, which shows that the opinions of public school teachers in this area is more valid than those of college and university staff.

Table 1

Mean C.B.T.E. Survey Results As Reported by 391 Public School Educators

Scale

1=Extremely important
2=Above average in importance
3=Average importance
4=Below average in importance
5=Little or no importance

| Rank | Competency | Mean Teacher Evaluation | Mean Supt. Evaluation | Mean Principal Evaluation | Mean Combined Evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ability to employ a variety of teaching techniques and methods | 1.37 | 1.21 | 1.10 | 1.30 |
| 2 | Skill in employing techniques which prevent disruptive and undesirable student behavior | 1.39 | 1.28 | 1.54 | 1.40 |
| 3 | Knowledge of curriculum in one's own discipline | 1.42 | 1.46 | 1.48 | 1.43 |
| 4 | Knowledge of the characteristics of effective teachers | 1.48 | 1.30 | 1.44 | 1.45 |
| 5 | Ability to effectively evaluate and report student performance | 1.51 | 1.28 | 1.44 | 1.47 |
| 6 | Knowledge of techniques which effectively resolve disruptive and undesirable student behavior | 1.55 | 1.41 | 1.64 | 1.54 |
| 7 | Ability to select appropriate instructional strategies to accomplish instructional objectives for specific content and students | 1.64 | 1.47 | 1.76 | 1.63 |
| 8 | Knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of teachers, students, administrators, and staff | 1.64 | 1.80 | 1.70 | 1.67 |
| 9 | Ability to identify and organize resource materials to accomplish instructional strategies and techniques | 1.81 | 1.59 | 1.89 | 1.79 |

| Rank | Competency | Mean Teacher Evaluation | Mean Supt. Evaluation | Mean Principal Evaluation | Mean Combined Evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Changes 8 |
| 10 | Skill in formulating lesson plans in one's own discipline | 1.87 | 1.59 | 1.85 | 1.83 |
| 11 | Ability to conduct parent-teacher and teacher-student conferences | 1.86 | 1.69 | 1.92 | 1.84 |
| 12 | Knowledge of the development of adolescents' morals, values, interests, and attitudes | 1.86 | 1.88 | 1.95 | 1.88 |
| 13 | Knowledge of legal and ethical considerations of school personnel | 1.99 | 1.73 | 1.89 | 1.94 |
| 14 | Knowledge of the adolescents relationships to peers, parents, and teachers | 1.95 | 1.87 | 2.00 | 1.95 |
| 15 | Knowledge of techniques to manage the physical environment of the classroom | 1.94 | 1.90 | 2.10 | 1.96 |
| 16 | Knowledge of requirements for certification | 2.00 | 1.95 | 2.07 | 2.00 |
| 17 | Knowledge of the adolescents roles, goals, and other concerns | 2.00 | 2.15 | 2.06 | 2.03 |
| 18 | Knowledge of intellectual growth and development of the individual | 2.04 | 2.02 | 2.02 | 2.03 |
| 19 | Knowledge of major contemporary problems in education | 2.08 | 2.21 | 1.74 | 2.04 |
| 20 | Knowledge of the various types of exceptional children | 2.07 | 2.15 | 2.23 | 2.10 |
| 21 | Knowledge of various instructional strategies appropriate for exceptional children | 2.16 | 2.20 | 2.41 | 2.20 |
| 22 | Knowledge of characteristics of a profession and the development of education as a profession | 2.28 | 2.20 | 2.18 | 2.25 |

Changes

9

| Rank | Competency | Mean Teacher Evaluation | Mean Supt. Evaluation | Mean Principal Evaluation | Mean Combined Evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | Knowledge of physiological and helath factors in adolescence | 2.30 | 2.22 | 2.26 | 2.28 |
| 24 | Knowledge of requirements for accreditation | 2.27 | 2.21 | 2.51 | 2.30 |
| 25 | Ability to write various levels of goals and instructional objectives | 2.40 | 1.93 | 2.28 | 2.32 |
| 26 | Ability to effectively utilize audio-visual materials with various instructional methods | 2.26 | 2.37 | 2.52 | 2.32 |
| 27 | Ability to operate basic audio-visual media | 2.35 | 2.56 | 2.53 | 2.40 |
| 28 | Ability to interpret and use standardized test information | 2.53 | 2.11 | 2.21 | 2.42 |
| 29 | Knowledge of learning theory, principles, and techniques as explained by behavior, cognitive, and humanistic psychology | 2.56 | 2.02 | 2.36 | 2.45 |
| 30 | Knowledge of the culturally diverse nature of American society as it relates to the school | 2.49 | 2.21 | 2.53 | 2.45 |
| 31 | Ability to select and prepare audio-visual materials | 2.47 | 2.62 | 2.65 | 2.52 |
| 32 | Knowledge of various publications devoted to education and to ones' discipline | 2.55 | 2.83 | 2.54 | 2.58 |
| 33 | Knowledge of the organization of public schools | 2.76 | 2.34 | 2.28 | 2.63 |
| 34 | Knowledge of professional organizations in education | 2.27 | 3.25 | 2.84 | 2.81 |
| 35 | Knowledge of the historical and philosophical development of education in the United States | 3.35 | 2.98 | 3.03 | 3.25 |
| | Mean of All Items Combined | 2.08 | 2.00 | 2.08 | 2.07 |

Table 2

Summary of Comments Made by Respondents

Longer student teaching and intern teaching; earlier contacts with students..41

Better mastery of subject matter.....24

Have less theory and more practical experiences.....22

Discipline and student behavior skills.....14

Better quality and more emphasis on teaching methods.....14

Greater emphasis on ethical and professional attitudes.....11

Higher admission standards into teacher education programs.....8

Motivational skills.....7

College teachers periodically teach in public schools.....7

Improved evaluation skills.....6

Improved oral and written skills.....5

Humanistic skills and attitudes.....5

Parent-teacher and student-teacher conference skills.....5

Job application and interviewing skills.....4

Better planning skills for exceptional children.....4

Knowledge of school laws.....3

Improved selection of teaching materials.....2

Improved planning skills.....2

Better college instruction.....2

Understanding of community relationships.....2

Sponsoring knowledge and skills.....2

Physical environment of the classroom, knowledge of.....2

Individualization of instruction.....1

| | Changes |
|---|---|
| | 11 |
| First-aid knowledge | 1 |
| Team teaching | 1 |
| Record keeping | 1 |
| Up-to-date business courses | 1 |
| Knowledge of PL94-142 and other federal programs | 1 |
| Knowledge of regional service centers | 1 |
| Spend more time in education department than in subject matter department | 1 |
| Total = | 200 |

References

AACTE. "Comparative Surveys Reveal Increase in PBTE Activity Since 1972." AACTE Bulletin (January-February 1976): 3.

Donald F. Enos. "A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Competency-Based and Non-Competency-Based Teacher Education at San Diego State University." Doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Austin (1976).

Michael Lorber. "From Traditional to Competency-Based Teacher Education and Back Again: An Eight-Year Experiment." (March, 1979): 523-524.

Hayden Smith and Thomas Nagel. "From Traditional to Competency-Based Teacher Education--and Never Back Again." Phi Delta Kappan (November, 1975): 194-195.